

Text Structures

When you understand how the writer has organized information, you will understand and remember the text better. Writers organize text in several different ways.

Chronological Order -The writer places events in the order in which they happen. Look for words like "first," "then," "finally," "a few minutes later," "next," "after lunch," "last year."
Example: First, Rhett was late getting to school. Then, he lost his homework. A few minutes later, the teacher asked him to clean out his desk. Now Rhett thinks it will be a bad day.

Comparison/Contrast -The text shows how ideas or things are alike or different. Look for words like "best," "more," "better," "less," "worse," "easier," "than."
Example: The best time to visit the Rocky Mountains is early fall. The weather is cooler in the fall than in the summer. You will see fewer people and more animals. The fall colors are more beautiful.

Cause and Effect -The text shows that one event causes another thing to happen. Look for words like "because," "then," "since," and "as a result."
Example: It rained for the first few days of the camping trip. As a result, most of the campers were restless and wanted to go home.

Question/Answer -The writer presents a question and then tries to answer it.
Example: Many schools are thinking about this question: Should students be made to wear uniforms? I believe they should not. First, clothing is a very important way that kids express themselves. . . .

Argument/Support -The writer presents his or her opinion about a particular argument and then supports it.
Example: Some would say that caricatures are funny pieces of art, but I think that they are fascinating things. They pick at specific little quirks about a person or thing and emphasize them to such a degree. . . .